

Lee Strobel's Ruling

Pastor Joseph Clark – May 22, 2020

“Faith is only as good as the one in whom it's invested.”

– Lee Strobel

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

– The Apostle Simon Peter refers to Christ, to the Hebrew Council of High Priests, Acts Chapter 4, verse 12

Less Strobel, born January 25, 1952, was an award-winning investigative journalist for the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Daily Herald*. He received a degree in journalism from the University of Missouri and a law degree from Yale Law School. Strobel was an atheist who approached all his investigative stories as a lawyer would, relying completely on evidence, documented testimony, and proof. He won an editor's award for his coverage of the Ford Motors Pinto crash case. He also was awarded the United Press International award for Public Service in Journalism. In and around 1979 Strobel's wife announced that she had accepted Jesus Christ as her saviour and was attending church as a saved Christian. Strobel took it upon himself to debunk his wife's belief, and commenced investigating the life of Christ with the intent of disproving the Resurrection. He hoped that this would convince his wife to discontinue her faith.

As part of this investigation, Strobel interviewed and challenged thirteen evangelical scholars. Through the entire investigation Strobel looked at the facts through a tainted lens with an agenda to prove that the resurrection of Christ was a fraud. Through the process of examining the views of the evangelical Christian scholars who defended the reliability of the New Testament, Strobel further examined the lives of the Apostles after Christ's ascension into Heaven, and how they martyred themselves for Christ. The investigation resulted in Strobel

becoming a born-again Christian on November 8, 1981, stating that he could not deny what his investigation uncovered.

My lady love once whispered the following into the ear of a dying relative, “Jesus Christ loves you and is ready for you to receive Him as your Lord and Saviour. You just need to reach out to Him with your heart.”

We receive in faith what God has revealed. Lee Strobel received Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

Strobel left journalism to become a theologian, and has since written several award-winning books on faith, hosts a Christian television program, and is regularly interviewed by CNN, ABC, 20/20, and FOX News. Strobel incorporated his notes in his first book, *The Case for Christ*, in which he presents compelling evidence about the authenticity and reliability of the New Testament. The book was made into a movie. In *A Case for Christ*, Strobel challenges the reader with the question, if the 12 Apostles of Christ did not see the signs and miracles of Christ, which they documented in the Gospels, why would they spend their lives placing themselves in constant danger of horrific Roman torture and execution and eventually martyr themselves?

I was raised in a Roman Catholic family attending a Roman Catholic Church and a Roman Catholic School. I entered adulthood with a basic knowledge of Christian Theology. However, I had never given myself to Christ. I loved God, and I loved Jesus. But I felt that it could not be so simple as one religion revealing the mysteries of God. I investigated Eastern philosophies, I read the Quran, the Hindu Bhagavat Gita, the writings of Buddha, Taoism, the Kabbalah, the Torah, I’ Ching, etc., etc. I researched various religious texts and did comparisons. I studied an assortment of unverified videos online having to do with the “true” origins of the Christian myth.

I began my days with prayer to God, but not in Jesus’s name. Yes, Jesus was a saviour, but so, I believed, was Buddha, so was Mohammed, so were all the prophets from various faiths. I had cobbled together my own religion. I was a pagan.

After my daily prayers, I would do lengthy meditation and visualization. I was searching for God in a manner that pleased the Enemy. I thought I was pretty smart. That I knew a thing or two. I intellectualized scripture. I believed that the answers were not found in one faith but in many. It was as though I was blending multiple styles of martial arts to come up with the superior fighting system.

During this time, I was tormented by the Enemy with depression, paranoia, and obsession. I was in Hell on Earth. I lost all hope. I felt that my children would be better off with me dead than alive. Each day was full of despair and perversity.

One fateful evening when I had hit rock bottom, I fell on my knees with tears in my eyes, and I clasped my hands and I confessed to God:

“Lord Jesus Christ, I can’t do this anymore. I cannot do this on my own. I need You, Lord. You are the way, the truth, and the life. There is salvation in only You. I accept You; I give myself unconditionally to You. I will believe everything in The Word, out of faith. I will stop investigating false religions and choose to believe out of faith. I choose to receive Your salvation. I give myself to You. Deliver me, Lord! Take me, I am all Yours! Save me, Jesus!”

I was immediately transformed by the healing power of The Holy Spirit. My depression, anxiety, paranoia, and obsession were replaced by an unquenchable thirst to know God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. I did this through daily devotions, prayer, Bible reading, Bible study, and church service. Shortly thereafter, I was called by the Holy Spirit to ministry, and I enrolled in seminary. I began walking out my faith.

Lee Strobel’s investigation resulted in his coming to Christ. As did mine. My misguided quest to know God, while no doubt pleasing momentarily to the Enemy, became my own qualifications which The Lord now uses in me for evangelism, apologetics, and His ministry.

I was ordained in May of 2019 at the age of 48. A truly blessed and wonderful day. A servant of Christ.

The Holy Spirit tells us in the word:

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, (Ephesian 2:8)

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

I sought the LORD, and He answered me; He delivered me from all my fears. (Psalm 34:4)

Lee Strobel began his investigation with the intent of proving the Resurrection a hoax. A myth. A falsity. But the Lord had him earmarked to further His Kingdom. By the will and grace of God, Lee Strobel went from a heavily armed atheist to a heavily armed disciple of Jesus Christ. In his own words:

“For me, apologetics proved to be the turning point of my life and eternity. I’m thankful for the scholars who so passionately and effectively defend the truth of Christianity – and today my life’s goal is to do my part in helping others get answers to the questions that are blocking them in their spiritual journey toward Christ.”

“When we help seekers diagnose which path they’re treading, assist them in avoiding its pitfalls, and expose them to the logic and evidence that uniquely support the Christian faith, we’re introducing them to the only spiritual option that truly qualifies to be called the way, the truth, and the life.”

“If Jesus sets the divine standard for mortality, I could now have an unwavering foundation for my choices and decisions, rather than basing them on the ever-shifting sands of expediency and self-centeredness.”

“Only in a world where faith is difficult can faith exist.”

“In short, I didn’t become a Christian because God promised I would have an even happier life than I had as an atheist. He never promised any such thing. Indeed, following Him would inevitably bring divine demotions in the eyes of the world. Rather, I became a Christian because the evidence was so compelling that Jesus really is the one-and-only Son of God who proved His divinity by rising from the dead. That meant following Him was the most rational and logical step I could possibly take.”

“To be honest, I didn’t want to believe that Christianity could radically transform someone’s character and values. It was much easier to raise doubts and manufacture outrageous objections than consider the possibility that God actually could trigger a revolutionary turn-around in such a depraved and degenerate life.”

“In the end, I came to the conclusion that the gospels were reliable eyewitness accounts that delivered accurate information about Jesus, including His crucifixion and Resurrection. But that created a problem for me. If Jesus really was who He said He was, then Jesus was God Himself. If Jesus truly did what the gospel eyewitnesses recorded, then Jesus is still God Himself. As someone who used to reject anything supernatural, I had to make a decision about my naturalistic presuppositions”

Praise God in all His glory for each of our journeys, which we travelled to come to Him. Be grateful, thankful, and joyous for the trials, experiences, and people, who were part of that journey. It all went according to plan. God’s plan. Let us have supreme confidence in His plan for us moving forward.

Sources:

“BibleGateway.” *BibleGateway.com: A Searchable Online Bible in over 150 Versions and 50 Languages.*, www.biblegateway.com/.

“Lee Strobel.” *Lee Strobel*, leestrobel.com/.

“Lee Strobel.” *Focus on the Family*, www.focusonthefamily.com/contributors/lee-strobel/.

Lee Strobel. 15 Apr. 2020, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Strobel.

“The Lee Strobel Center.” *Lee Strobel Center for Evangelism and Applied Apologetics*, www.ccu.edu/strobelcenter/.